

Theory and Research Behind *The Creative Curriculum*®

Theory/Research	Key Findings	Implications for Practice
Abraham Maslow	Meeting children’s basic needs is essential to helping them succeed as learners.	<p>Create an environment where children feel safe and experience a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Plan learning opportunities that are challenging yet "doable" to foster self-esteem and competence.</p>
Erik Erikson	Social/emotional learning is a lifelong process that begins at birth. When adults are responsive to children’s needs, children learn to trust, develop independence, and take initiative to assert themselves in socially acceptable ways.	<p>Trust—Follow a consistent schedule, develop a positive relationship with each child, follow through on promises.</p> <p>Autonomy—Provide appropriate materials (challenging but not too difficult), acknowledge children’s efforts, provide responsibilities.</p> <p>Initiative—Value children’s ideas, offer choices, promote problem solving and risk taking, encourage creativity.</p>
Brain Research	The brain builds itself through experience. The richer the experiences a child has, the more the brain grows. The first five years of life are sensitive periods for developing emotional control, attachment to others, and language. Stable, nurturing relationships are essential to healthy development and learning.	<p>Focus on social/emotional development as well as language and music skills.</p> <p>Ensure that each child has access to a well-balanced diet and daily exercise.</p> <p>Provide rich and varied learning experiences.</p> <p>Provide time and opportunities for children to practice new skills.</p> <p>Respond to children in ways that let them know that you respect and value their ideas and efforts.</p>
Jean Piaget	Young children think differently from adults and their thinking changes over time. They construct their own understanding of concepts as they manipulate real, concrete objects and participate in firsthand experiences.	<p>Offer many firsthand experiences that invite children to explore, experiment, and make discoveries.</p> <p>Provide experiences that are responsive to where children are in their development.</p>

Theory and Research Behind The Creative Curriculum®, continued

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<p>Lev Vygotsky</p>	<p>Children grow cognitively not only by acting on objects but also by interacting with knowledgeable peers and adults.</p>	<p>Offer opportunities for children to work with and interact with children of all ability levels.</p> <p>Provide challenging experiences, that is, those that can be accomplished with sensitive guidance.</p>
<p>Howard Gardner</p>	<p>People can be intelligent in many different ways: linguistic, logical, musical, spatial, bodily, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic.</p>	<p>Provide activities and experiences that allow children to explore all intelligences.</p> <p>Focus on children's strengths as they learn new skills.</p>
<p>Sara Smilansky</p>	<p>Children learn through play: functional play, constructive play, games with rules, and dramatic or pretend play.</p>	<p>Set up an environment that helps children get the most out of their play experiences.</p> <p>Interact with children in ways that invite them to explore, talk about their work, and expand their thinking.</p> <p>Encourage sociodramatic play and provide materials that stimulate imagination.</p>
<p>Resilience Research</p>	<p>Children who have faced hardship are not doomed. They can develop the strength and skills necessary to deal with adversity when teachers use good early childhood practices.</p>	<p>Provide a safe, secure environment.</p> <p>Provide experiences that enable children to feel successful and competent.</p> <p>Be responsive to children, offering them encouragement and hope.</p>